

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

After entry of this amendment, claims 1-35 will be pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, 9, 11, 27, and 30 have been amended. Claims 32-35 have been added. Support for the new and amended claims can be found in the specification. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyana et al., United States patent number 5,514,893 in view of Verhaege et al., United States patent number 6,529,359. Claims 9-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyana et al. in view of Verhaege and Kwon et al., United States patent application number 20020163768. Claims 17-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyana et al. in view of Verhaege and Toyashima, United States patent application number 20010017755 and Sher, United States patent number 6,417,721. Claim 27 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fugate et al., United States patent number 6,525,594 in view of Zhu et al., United States patent number 5,933,047. Reconsideration of these rejections and allowance of the pending claims in light of these amendments and remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim 1

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyana et al. in view of Verhaege. But these references do not show or suggest each and every element of this claim. For example, claim 1, as amended, recites "a resistor having a first terminal coupled to the pad, and a second terminal coupled to receive an input signal, and a second integrated circuit coupled to the second terminal of the resistor to provide the input signal, wherein the resistor is not on the first integrated circuit or the second integrated circuit." The cited references do not provide this feature.

The pending office action cites the resistor Rout in Figure 1 of Verhaege as providing this feature. (See pending office action, page 2, fourth paragraph.) But this resistor is included in an output circuit that provides output signal. Thus, Verhaege's resistor Rout is on an integrated circuit that provides the input signal, that is, it is on the second integrated circuit.

Accordingly, the cited references do not provide a resistor that is not on the first integrated circuit or the second integrated circuit, as is required by the claim.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 should be allowed.

Claim 17

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyanaga in view of Verhaege, Toyashima, and Sher. But these references do not show or suggest each and every element of this claim. For example, claim 17 recites “a clamp circuit coupled between the input of the buffer and the first supply terminal of the buffer...wherein the clamp circuit comprises a clamp diode in series with a switch, the switch capable of closing if opened and opening if closed under control of a first signal.” The cited references do not provide this feature.

The pending office action cites Figures 2A-2F as providing the required switch. (See pending office action, page 5, fourth paragraph.) But Sher’s switch is used to allow users to select one of two input buffers without increasing capacitance at an input bond pad. (See Sher, abstract.) Sher is silent as to the presence of any clamp or ESD diode. Thus, Sher does not provide a clamp diode in series with a switch as required by the claim.

Toyashima does provide a fuse F1 in series with a diode D1 in Figure 2. (See Toyashima, Figure 2.) Toyashima leaves the fuse in place until the integrated circuit is in a system, then blows the fuse such that the capacitance of the diode is not present during the operation of the device. Toyashima does not show or suggest that adding the capacitance of the diode back in at a later time is desirable. Thus, Toyashima does not show or suggest that the fuse F1 could be replaced with a switch. Accordingly, the cited references do not show or suggest a clamp diode in series with a switch, as is required by the claim.

For at least these reasons, claim 17 should be allowed.

Claim 27

Claim 27 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fugate in view of Zhu. But these references do not show or suggest each and every element of

this claim. For example, claim 27, as amended, recites “a logic circuit coupled to receive the output of the hot-socket circuit and an enable signal and to provide the control signal.” The cited references do not provide this feature.

Specifically, in Figure 2, Fugate shows a comparator coupled directly to a switch 32. (See Fugate, Figure 2.) There is no logic circuit between the comparator 34 and the switch 32. That is, Fugate does not show or suggest a logic circuit coupled to receive an enable signal and to provide a control signal to the switch 32. Moreover, there is no enable signal included in this figure.

Similarly, in Figure 4, Zhu shows a comparator 95 coupled to P3 and P4 through inverters 100 and 102. (See Zhu, Figure 4.) Zhu does not show or suggest a logic circuit coupled to receive an enable signal and to provide a control signal to P3 and P4. Further, there is no enable signal included in this figure. Accordingly, neither reference shows or suggests a logic circuit coupled to receive the output of the hot-socket circuit and an enable signal and to provide the control signal, as is required by the claim.

For at least these reasons, claim 27 should be allowed.

Other claims

Claim 9 should be allowed for similar reasons as claim 1. The other claims depend on one of the above claims and should be allowed for at least the same reasons and for the additional limitations they recite.

CONCLUSION

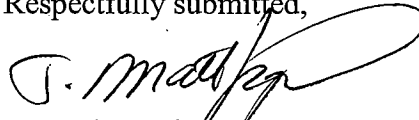
In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

Application number 10/804,712
Amendment dated August 6, 2007
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 Expedited Procedure
Examining Group 2816

PATENT

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Matthew Zigmant", written over a horizontal line.

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